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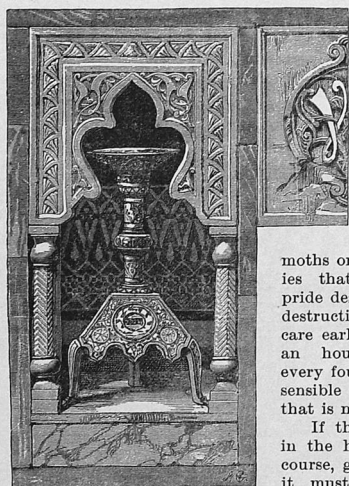
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## THE PLAGUE OF INSECTS.

VERY few simple rules will save a housekeeper the annoyance of finding her best blanket perforated by moths or the curtain draperies that were her special pride destroyed by the same destructive creatures. A little care early in the season and an hour's attention once every four weeks, with some sensible precautions, are all that is necessary.

If there is a cedar closet in the house the task is, of course, greatly simplified, but it must not be supposed that any relaxation of vigilance is allowable even in this case, as with carelessness in leaving the door open and the cover of the chests raised, a sufficient amount of fresh air will get in to enable the moths to live and flourish, the while fattening upon the choicest upholstered dainties that the storeroom affords. A cedar closet or chest is valuable only while it is kept closed. The odor of the wood, which is the only safeguard, when sufficiently strong suffocates the insects, and as a matter of course fresh air so reduces the strength of the odor that it is comparatively, if not altogether, harmless to the enemy. There have been many complaints of the inefficiency of cedar wood as a protection against moths, but they were, doubtless, subject to the above criticism in every instance. Where there are no cedar closets or chests more care is necessary as well as more untiring watchfulness throughout the season.

A most effective and economical home-made receptacle for winter hangings and woollen furnishings is made from a large packing box. The boards forming the cover should be fastened together by cleats upon the under side. It may be attached to the box by a hinge or be left loose according to the fancy or convenience of the owners, and the skill in handling tools. The hinge is, undoubtedly, a protection, as it insures the more perfect closing of the cover. Line the inside of the box with thick paper, the sort that is used for doing up express packages is best. It should be applied with paste and all joinings carefully closed, so that when finished the paper shall be in one continuous sheet. The cover should be similarly papered on the inside.

Camphor should be freely used; wrap several pieces in thin cloth and lay them in the bottom of the box at the corners. Thick heavy fabrics should be put first in the box and fine light ones afterward. Between each package or article small bits of camphor wrapped in cloth should be put. Any bit of thin rag is better than paper for holding the camphor crumbs. Paper retains the odor to some extent while it easily penetrates cloth. In this way all the hangings of a house may be securely packed. Once or twice in the course of the summer the articles should be taken out and examined and the camphor renewed if it has evaporated. Many housekeepers prefer separate boxes for hangings and bedding. In this case a similar box may be provided for the blankets and other articles that need such care. Furs and woollen garments are also perfectly safe if treated in this manner.

The housekeeper is often seriously troubled about the destruction of her carpets by moths. After taking them up and sending them to the cleaners at great trouble and cost, they are no sooner down again than the pests come from the walls and floors and continue their mischievous work. A simple and effective remedy is to sprinkle the bare floor very lightly with ordinary dairy salt, putting down the carpet lining over it. About once in two weeks sweep the carpet thoroughly with coarse salt. Carpets are known that have been treated in this way and for years not a moth has made its appearance even in the dark and unused corners, and that, too, where the house was infested with them previous to the use of this simple preventive.

Where carpets are "full of moths," as the housekeeper expresses it, and they abound throughout the entire premises, they may be thoroughly cleared out by the use of brimstone. It is necessary, however, for the family to vacate the house for twenty-four hours and carry all silver ware and plated articles with them. Close all outer doors, blinds and windows and open all inner doors. Make a small fire in the cellar in any way that

may suggest. A kettle of live coals, a laundry stove or a fire built on the earth or even on the concrete bottom of the cellar will answer. Take about two inches in length from a roll of brimstone and place it on a metal plate heated over this fire. A cover from the range or cooking stove will serve the purpose admirably. Be sure that the fire is so arranged that it will burn for some time, fifteen minutes to half an hour at the least. It is necessary that everything be prepared so that the last act is to put the brimstone on the heated plate, as the operator must leave the house at once. Leave it to do its work for twenty-four hours if possible, then open doors and windows and let the air circulate freely.

If the operation has been thorough, there will be nothing left in the way of insect life about the place. It is well worth while when a house is empty to give it several air baths of this sort. It is certain and permanent destruction to every species of vermin, the more so if it is several times repeated and the vapors allowed to ascend between walls, casings and floors. It not only kills the living insects but destroys their eggs, and will keep new comers away for a long time.

The smell of the brimstone, which is somewhat objectionable, may be covered by burning any sort of incense that the housekeeper may fancy, and which may be bought at any druggists. The brimstone odor will soon pass away, leaving the house free not only of the insects but many disease germs and noisome vapors that lurk about cellars and basements. The same course may be taken in case any unpleasant odor is discovered about the house.

Coarse salt scattered about the floors of closets and behind cupboards and drawers, will keep moths from harboring in such places. It may be thrown freely about on the regular sweeping day, and taken up with the dust. It brightens carpets, lays the dust on bare floors, removes musty, stuffy smells, and is a general cleanser and purifier. It may be used to advantage about bedsteads, but in very small quantities, care being taken that it does not come in contact with any of the iron fittings, as they would be rusted and spoiled.

The finest furniture and the choicest upholstery can be freed from insects by placing the articles piece by piece in some place remote from fire, and having first thoroughly dusted them, pour over them from a garden watering pot with a very fine sprinkler, a quantity of deodorized naphtha. A couple of quarts is sufficient for a large easy chair; a sofa will require more. A garden syringe, with fine spraying tube, is more economical to use, but as the naphtha should cost but about 10 cents for a quart, or less in larger quantities, it may be used quite freely, at least the articles should be completely saturated with it. The utmost care must be taken that no fire or flame comes near the vapor of the naphtha, as it is highly inflammable, and is explosive if at all confined. It evaporates very rapidly, and after remaining in the open air for a few hours the article cleaned has no odor, nor will the process injure the most delicate colors if carefully managed. To insure this, however, the article must be free from dust and be thoroughly saturated with the naphtha. In very fine fabrics, such as curtains or other silken hangings, it is well to hold the pieces up by the edges and shake them dry, the fringes or trimmings hanging down from the lower edges as the piece is held. They will dry very rapidly, and there is less danger of cloudy effects than if they are allowed to remain in folds and dry slowly. The open air is preferable for such work, but the sun should not be allowed to shine on the goods during the process, as it may cause them to dry in spots and become clouded and dingy looking.

There is too little system in the management of household affairs. Because there are some things that will not conform to rules and regulations, too many women take it for granted that the entire household must go on in a half organized fashion, and with this mistaken idea they go on and wear out their own strength and patience and the temper and toleration of their families, systematic in nothing but carelessness and disorder.

How to rid the house of roaches, croton bugs and similar pests is a question of no little moment to most housekeepers. Brimstone vapor will drive them out but they will come again if there is anything to come for. Care should be taken that no scraps of food are left scattered about. Persian powder is, doubtless, the best insect destroyer that can be put to general use, if fresh and freely used. It is certain to destroy roaches and is harmless to the human family. There seems to be no reliable remedy for the plague of red ants. The surest way to get rid of them is to fill all cracks and spaces with tarred paper or the shreds of hemp such as are used for caulking boats. Over this paste strong paper or cloth that has been soaked in alum water and thoroughly dried.

The most effectual preventive is to keep everything sweet in metal boxes, and, above all, never scatter crumbs of cake or sweetmeats about the yard, steps, or areaways. Salt is as efficacious as any known article in keeping them from cupboards and pantries. It is said that salt, alum and borax in equal quantities, mixed, powdered and scattered about their haunts, will drive them away.